to the crops; for reporting bad drainage; and for assisting allotment holders and seeing that they cultivated their plots well. They rendered very valuable service in carrying out a survey of the land throughout the Kingdom, to ascertain its state of cultivation and what room there was for improvement.

A land survey

This survey was carefully planned in advance by a member of the Land Valuation Staff created under the 1909-10 Budget. Maps were prepared on which every field was shown, and particulars about it could be entered up by the district sub-committees. This kind of work, extended over the country, gave a most valuable picture of our potential resources, and enabled the preparations for the 1918 harvest to be planned on a sound basis.

By this means we learned in October, 1917, through a special return from the County Executive Committees, that the programme for breaking-up of grass-land was making very uneven progress in different parts. It was hampered by the shortage of skilled ploughmen. Of 21,500 ploughmen whom the Army had under-taken to supply, only 13,000 had been forthcoming, and most of these turned out to be not really skilled. Only 2,500 knew how to plough!

Shortage of ploughmen

Progress hampers

The fact was that Passchendaele was playing havoc with our side of the war of attrition. With its effect on our available man-power in France I

deal
elsewhere. Here at home it was crippling our food
programme. The military chiefs scoffed at the idea
that the final issue was being fought in Britain's
ploughed fields and on the high seas that surround
our islands. Every young ploughman snatched was
to them a recruit. In reality he was a casualty before